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ABSTRACT

A listing is presented of 17 documents in the ERIC database concerning the Online Catalog (sometimes referred to as OPAC or Online Public Access Catalog), a computer-based and supported library catalog designed for patron use. The database usually represents recent acquisitions and often contains information about books on order and items in circulation. The ERIC documents consist of papers, journal articles, and newsletters published (with one exception) since 1980. They are listed alphabetically by author under the following categories: planning for the online catalog, description of specific OPACs, user studies, and online subject access. (KC)

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ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOGS
AN ERIC FACT SHEET

OCT 82

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IN BRIEF...

ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOGS
-An ERIC Fact Sheet-

Libraries are converting their catalogs from the traditional card catalog to COM (Computer Output Microform) and/or to the Online Catalog. The Online Catalog, sometimes called OPAC or Public Online Catalog, is a computer-based and supported library catalog designed to be accessed via a terminal so that library patrons may directly and effectively search for and retrieve bibliographic information. The assistance of an intermediary such as a specially trained member of the library staff is not usually necessary.

OPACs are to be distinguished from other bibliographic databases and retrieval systems such as ERIC on DIALOG, ORBIT, or BRS, or MEDLINE, or PSYCHINFO because they are free to be used in the library and elsewhere. The database usually only represents the recent acquisitions of the library, or a group of libraries. Oftentimes the OPAC will contain information about books on order, items in circulation, etc., thereby giving more information about library items than the card catalog could ever provide.

Many university, college, public, and special libraries -- and yes, even school libraries -- have installed online catalogs. There is a great deal of variety between and among these libraries and the design of their online catalogs. A recent publication in the OCLC Library, Information, and Computer Science Series describes a dozen different versions of OPACs, concentrating on the most important feature, "The User Interface." (Hildreth, 1982)

The professional literature of computers and library science is covering this new development quite thoroughly, covering such topics as the following:

1. Planning for the Online Catalog
2. Descriptions of Specific OPACs
3. User Studies
4. Catalog Design, Data Storage, and Related System Considerations
5. Online Subject Access

Many pertinent references on these topics appear in ERIC. The following list highlights some of the most recent reports and the thoughtful papers which address the issues involved.

ERIC **Clearinghouse on Information Resources, Syracuse University**
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The ERIC database contains abstracts and availability information for many of the following relevant items:

Planning for the Online Catalog

Matthews, Joseph R. "Online Public Access Catalogs: Assessing the Potential." Library Journal, 107 (June 1, 1982), 1067-1071.

Hildreth, Charles R. Online Public Access Catalogs: The User Interface. Dublin, OH: OCLC, 1982. 280p. $18 (Order from OCLC, Dept. 630, Box ONB, Columbus, OH 43265.)

Johnson, Millard F., Jr. "After the Online Catalog: A Call for Active Librarianship." American Libraries, 13 (April 1982), 235-239. EJ 263 388.

Horny, Karen L. "Online Catalogs: Coping with the Choices." Journal of Academic Librarianship, 8 (March 1982), 14-19. EJ 261 860.

Bausser, Jaye. "Online Catalogs." RTSD Newsletter (several issues, 1981-82).

Divilbiss, J. L., ed. Public Access to Library Automation. Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing (17th, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1980). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 1981. ED 210 018.

Kaske, Neal K. and Ferguson, Douglas. On-Line Public Access to Library Bibliographic Data Bases: Developments, Issues, and Priorities. Final Report. Columbus, OH: Ohio College Library Center; Branford, CT: Research Libraries Group, 1980. ED 195 275.

Descriptions of Specific OPACs

Clinton, Marshall. "PHOENIX: An Online System for a Library Catalogue." Database, 5 (February 1982), 52-65. EJ 260 091.

Klemperer, Katherina and Berger, Mike. University of California Prototype On-Line Catalog: Preliminary Specifications for the Patron Interface. Working Paper No. 7. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1980. ED 195 272.

Clement, Hope E. A. The Automated Authority File at the National Library of Canada. Paper presented at the Conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (45th Copenhagen, Denmark), 1979. ED 185 991.

Goldstein, Charles M. and Ford, William H. "The User-Cordial Interface." Online Review, 2 (1978), 269-274. EJ 192 793.

User Studies

Ferguson, Douglas and others. "The CLR Public Online Catalog Study: An Overview." Information Technology and Libraries, 1 (June 1982), 84-97. Includes questionnaires for users and non-users.

Pritchard, Sarah M. SCORPIO: A Study of Public Users of the Library of Congress Information System. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1981. ED 198 801.

Catalog Design, Database Storage and Related System Considerations

Hildreth, Charles R. "Online Browsing Support Capabilities." Proceedings ASIS Annual Meeting, Columbus, OH, October 17-21, 1982. (In press).

Online Subject Access

Cochrane, Pauline A. "Subject Access in the Online Catalog." Research Libraries in OCLC: A Quarterly, (January 1982), 1-7. ED 215 686.

Mandel, Carol A. Subject Access in the Online Catalog. Washington DC: Council of Library Resources, Inc., 1981. ED 212 286.

Kaske, Neal K. and Sanders, Nancy P. "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Subject Access: The View of the Library Patron." Proceedings of the ASIS, 43rd Annual Meeting, 323-325. White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc., 1980 and "Online Subject Access: The Human Side of the Problem." RQ, 20 (Fall 1980), 52-58. EJ 234 707.

ERIC documents (ED numbers) may be ordered from ERIC Document Reproduction Service, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210.

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